

TO: Françoise Pellé, Director, ISSN International Centre

FROM: Barbara B. Tillett, JSC Chair

SUBJECT: Major title changes for serials in Chinese, Japanese, and Korean (RDA 2.3.2.13.1, ISBD A.2.6.1 and ISSN 2.3.1), discussion paper about the “first five words” rule

The JSC thanks the ISSN Network for submitting this discussion paper and looks forward to the results of your test. Please see our Web site for the full set of responses from our constituencies, available at <http://www.rda-jsc.org/working2.html#community-issn-2>.

We are in general agreement with the proposed topics for future study and are most interested to know exactly what you will test. Will you be exploring any of the following questions?

- 1) Would the ‘first five words’ instruction stay in effect for languages that have words, or would it go away completely?
- 2) Can any new approaches be accommodated that do not significantly increase the need for new descriptions?
- 3) Can any new approaches be easily applied by catalogers?
- 4) Were publishers consulted to see if they consider such changes to result in new works?
- 5) Would not the “addition, deletion, change, or reordering of any content word/content element” in the title proper mean more title changes? Why not consider such changes as variant titles or sequential titles with dates?

We observe that the “first five words” instruction is useful as a rule of thumb for those languages where it can be applied, but recognize it cannot be applied to some languages, and we would add Thai to your list of those. Generally, we feel it remains helpful to have such a guiding instruction for when it applies and to have another generic instruction for other languages.

The JSC observed that because any change would result in a change in our mutual harmonization with ISBD, so we will certainly want to stay in close communication with the ISBD Review Group as we progress.

Our members also observed that lack of non-Roman scripts in the ISSN Portal actually compounds the problem. Do you have plans to add non-Roman scripts soon?

We note that Japanese and Korean languages divide text into words, so the instruction of the “first five words” does not cause any difficulties in the decision process for the title changes (prepositions, conjunctions, particles, interjections, etc., are not counted).

As for Chinese, serial catalogers at the Library of Congress report that they do not remember applying the “first five...” instruction when determining if the difference is a major or minor change. Because they do not apply artificial word division to the Chinese language in script or the Romanized form, unlike Japanese and Korean, they are less affected by the “first five...” instruction. They believe current RDA 2.3.2.13, etc., with the LC-PCC PS’s for 2.3.2.13, etc., are sufficient for them to apply major and minor changes in the title proper for serials.

We would welcome your proposal.

[NOTE: The original ISSN document was mis-numbered as 6JSC/ISSN/2, and should have been in the 6JSC/ISSN/Discussion series. This mis-numbering is retained for tracking purposes.]